Nº 1. 1949

Ally Sloper's HALF HOLIDAY

2D

Founded 1884

Featuring the Ally Sloper characters created by C. H. Ross.

ALLY IS SO BEWILDERED AND DAZED WITH THE MANY FORMS, CARDS, AND CONTRDLS, THAT HE EXCLAIMS — CARDS TD THE RIGHT DF ME, FDRMS TD THE LEFT DF ME, CDNTRDLS IN FRONT DF ME, AND WITH MANY TAXES I'M BURDENED.

(Conveying no reflection on those responsible.)

TO CORRESPONDENTS

Correspondents wishing their mss. or sketches to be returned must enclose a stamped envelope large enough to contain the contribution submitted.

For Advertising Space in this publication write to :—

Advertising Manager,
ALLY SLOPER'S PUBLICATIONS.

The Editor will be pleased to hear from any readers who have took numbers of this publication (Ally Sloper's Halt Holiday).

EDITORIAL OFFICE :
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The next edition will be published during the first week of June.

ALLY SLOPER'S RETURN

A great commotion was created in Mars when word got around from the emigration department that a man had arrived by rocket from Britain and was desirous of seeing one called Ally Sloper who was alleged to have left Britain for Mars and thought to be resident there.

I was informed of the man's arrival and told that he was being held in custody on our Ellis Planet as he had no passport and would I stand security for his behaviour.

Naturally, as I had enough trouble in being responsible for my own behaviour I said I was not inclined to be guarantee for an unknown individual from Britain.

On asking our defence department for permission to see the man I was informed that they were rather reluctant to agree to such, as they viewed with suspicion the fact that I was having messages or visitors from Britain or any other earthly country, in that I myself originally came from Britain, it looked as if I was a British spy and though we were in a very good natural defence position our government was not going to run the risk of our country being invaded.

Now I must explain that when I arrived in Mars about thirty years ago they had a certain suspicion that I had come from Earth just to spy out the land for it was reported in the press from our foreign correspondent that the nations of Earth were very clever at invading other countries and annexing them calling them colonies and giving as the reason for so doing, that they were going to educate them, and what they had done was for their good. (As to the rights and wrongs of that I am not entering into them.) But what the Martians said was that they were not wanting to be educated by a foreign power and as I had seen fit to enter their country, there I must stay, further, all my letters and telephone calls would be censored (but as I have not received any letters or phone calls I think they must have meant prohibited).

In the light of the foregoing explanation it will be appreciated that our government in Mars was rather suspicious regarding the man from Britain who wanted to see me and what increased their suspicion was a recent report from our intelligence department to the effect that Britain, America and Russia were known to be experimenting in rockets and planes with a view to seeing whose plane or rocket could get nearest to our planet.

Now as we Martians don't owe these countries anything we know that they are not trying to contact us to collect a debt, hence the reasons for the treatment given to this individual and our governments suspicions of us Britishers. One thing I would like to say is that the climate and the way of life here were now suiting me or perhaps to be more correct I was getting acclimatised and growing more into the ways of the Martians and they were losing, or seemed to be less suspicious of me, so much so that I was now President of the Laughter and Joy Ministry.

This was a government department that had a grant of 50 per cent of the national expenditure and was the principal and most valued department in our government, from which you will see that I was in quite a good position and got that position through ability and not because I had a friend who had a friend who had a relation in the government.

On considering everything I decided that so far as the Britisher was concerned it would be better if I did not appear too anxious to see him, though none the less there was a very strong desire in me to hear about all that had been happening in my old country in the last 30 years or so, but I suppressed that desire, feeling that the government would deal with the whole affair and I had better keep out of it meantime.

Yes, I would keep out of it, so said I, but the affair was brought to a head like this. (If I don't hurry up and bring it to a head I'll never get back to earth and that's what this is leading up to or down to, you see.)

It would be about 2-30 mid-moon, I was listening to our inter-planet world's radio, when I saw my visitor light flash. I asked through the inter-com. who was calling, the reply came "Intelligence No. 1. Urgent." I pressed the admittance button, and soon two men arrived. To my surprise one was the Britisher, though his dress was much different to that worn in my day. The other was chief of our intelligence department.

Now our intelligence department was the smallest and most insignificant of all our departments, yet as I looked at the chief I could see that he felt that now he was on to a big case, and was chief of the chiefs, that our very existence depended on him, for we had no

"We would ask your honour to hear what this man has to say."

Navy, Army or Air Force. Such was not required with us for there were no wars, as one planet never went to war with another. The only foe we had to watch was the greed and stupidity of the peoples of the planet called Earth, and here was one of them who again had penetrated to our planet, Mars. This certainly was an important matter, probably an inter-planet affair.

The chief, after introducing himself, then said, "We would ask you, your honour, to hear what this man has to say, and we regret troubling you." My designation and title was "The Right Honourable Honourable" Ally Sloper, P.L. & J., and as a rule one had to have two appointments before they would be allowed to see me. (In my former days on earth I was frequently asked if I had an appointment. It was rather a surprising story the Britisher had to unfold. He said there was much need, and a large number of people had expressed the desire for the return of Ally Sloper if such were possible and he had been asked to get into touch with me and see if I would return and help the old country out.

I asked him various questions relative to conditions on earth and also what his profession was and he replied that if I swore to secrecy, he would tell me. I promised this secrecy but as the promise was only copyright in Mars I am at perfect liberty now to reveal it in Britain and the name he gave to his profession was "Black Market Racketeer and Contact Man." This was a new one on me, but as he explained, this was a profession that had developed within the last few years and had turned out to be a most lucrative one. I then asked him where he had procured the rocket that brought him to Mars and his reply was it was hush-hush, for it was from under the counter. This was another new one on me and I thought it must be "some" counter that had accommodation for a rocket under it, for the only counters that I could recollect were a shop counter and those that in former days had been used for playing ludo and tiddly-winks with.

Our chief of intelligence then said that in recent years there had been an increase in the number of rockets landing in our magnetic rocket defence web, but this was the first one that had an occupant in it, that is, the first since the last one and I happened to be the man in that one. Now in case any nation has the idea of invading Mars by rocket let me assure you it is doomed to failure, for they have a natural and amazing magnetic rocket web which ensures that whenever a rocket comes within a given distance from Mars it is drawn into the web by magnetic power and there it is like the fly in the spider's web and therein is the fly in the ointment, so far as invading Mars is concerned. In giving thought and consideration to the great desire in the old country for my return I decided to ask the Mars government for the Stilton Hundreds and said good-by-ee to my constituents and they replied Bon Voyage. They are very good linguists in Mars.

One difficulty now arose, and that was that the Martian government said that if I left then the other Britisher would require to remain, and to be frank with me they were only too pleased to have my resignation for it would save a lot of comment in the press in that as my jokes were getting old and they had heard them so often their intention had been to ask me to accept a seat in the house of Pears so that they could appoint a new Minister.

When our British friend heard about his possibly being held in Mars he made no objection for he said that his business was now being ruined by legitimate traders and it was getting more and more difficult every day for a contact man to make a living. When a deputation of their association met the British government's representatives to see if they could in any way subsidise or help the profession as it was a national necesssity, the government immediately replied that as they knew how much it meant to the country they had decided to nationalise this profession.

They stated that they would indemnify members of the profession by giving them free board and lodgings under government supervision, but in the light of the report which this Britisher had had from his colleague he thought he would remain in Mars and start up business there. His colleague had stated that the supervision in the government hotel was most strict and hard, the food was as hard and the beds were even harder still, hence the reason why he decided to stay in Mars.

So after all this preamble I was placed in a rocket and under the control of the magnetic ray I was lowered down to earth where I arrived with a considerable jolt, and here I am back with you once again.

Yours as always,
The Eminent,
"ALLY SLOPER."

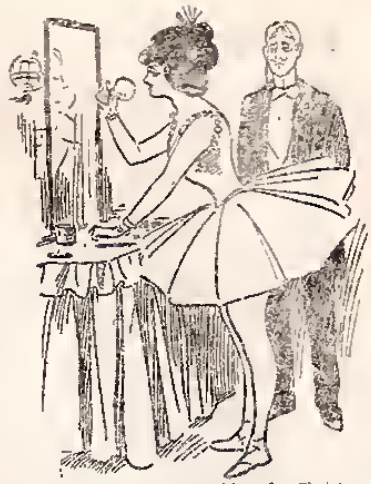
I was lowered down to earth, where I arrived with a considerable jerk, and here I am back with you once again.

A PAINFUL BLUNDER.

(1) Monsieur Alphonse arrives in London from La France, and, feeling peckish, enters a restaurant.

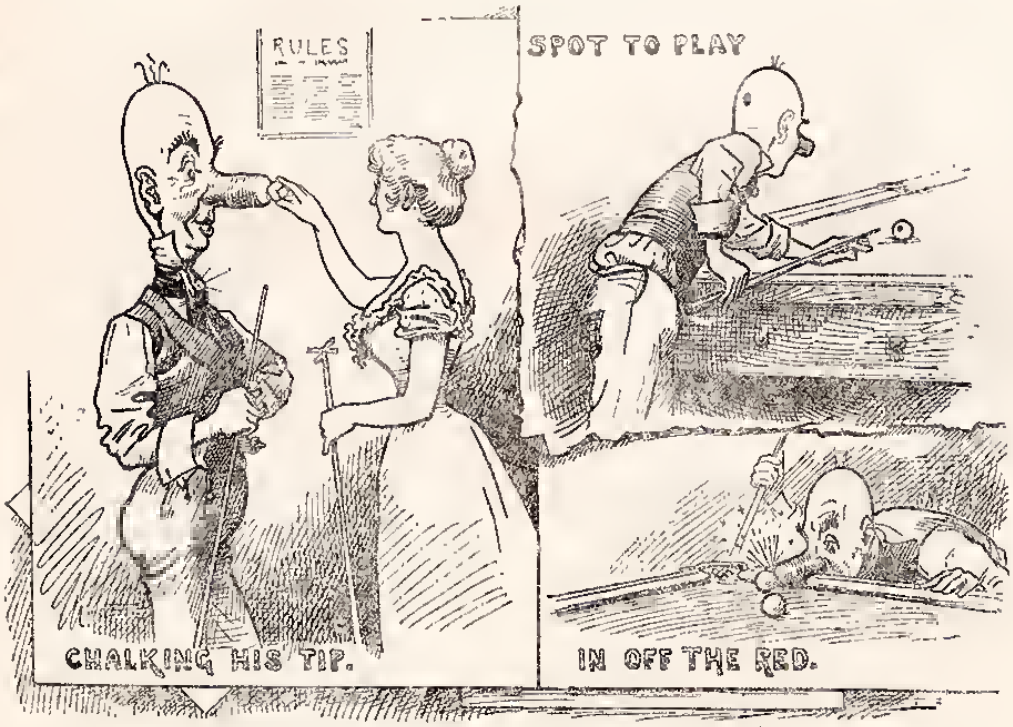
(2) During the temporary absence of the *garçon*, he congratulates himself on having discovered a place where the custom of his own country is kept up in the flasks of red and white wine placed upon the table, gratis. He proceeds to sample same.

(3) Alas! it was *fish sauce and salad oil*. Facial expressions and contortions of Monsieur in consequence.



"Shall you hang up your stockings for Christmas?" "No, my tights; they hold more."

BILLIARDS EXTRAORDINARY AT MILDEW COURT.



The fair one belongs to the "Friv," crowd, and knows how to play the game.

MORE SCIENCE.

Professor. It is a more than partly accepted theory that lockjaw is caused by the presence of a microbe.
Little Boffles. Do you really think so, old man? Lor'—can't yer pot one and innoculate my wife with it?

"IT SATISFIED THE KID"

Hope and Joy: I say, pa, when the clergyman prayed for all wicked people just now, why did he shut his eyes?
Papa: He didn't want to hurt anybody's feelings, dear, by appearing to look at them.

HOW CERTAIN LOCALITIES GOT THEIR NAMES.

GRAY'S INN was called originally Grace-*in*, or Grace-*is-in*, because of the place being once a cricket-field used by the London 'prentices.

KING'S CROSS.—One of the Saxon Kings lost his temper one day, because he missed the last train at the Great Northern. For generations after the spot was held sacred where the *King* was *cross*. Hence the name.

EARL'S COURT.—The Earl of Hammersmith was thought to be proof against Love's arrows, but the Countess of Brompton extracted from him a confession of love one day at Fulham. The place is called *Earl's caught* to this day.

BAKER STREET is a corruption of *Baker's treat*. King Alfred, after his adventure with the cakes, set the good woman and her husband up in business here, and the *baker* used to give a *treat* to the poor of the neighbourhood annually.

KICKED, WITH THANKS

It is not necessary to lead a moral life to get on the stage. At the same time virtue is not always necessarily a drawback. But Harold Howard nee Spriggins and Rosie Roseleaf nee Sprouts were lawfully married at a suburban church and the breath of scandal has never sullied their names.

Now Harold was not always engaged at the same Theatre as Rosie, and indeed was frequently "out of a shop," but he made it a point to drop in of a night at the most "adjacent," where kindred spirits commingled and two-toed, and thus was ready at the stage door to take Rosie home Camberwell way in the last bus once technically known as "boat."

There came a time, however, when Harold (it was a Saturday) had been about with the boys all the afternoon and got with them later on, and was behind time in Wellington Street. It was an awfully wet night, Rosie, blue with cold, peeped northwards and southwards and shivered and felt ready to cry.

Suddenly a Johnnie pushed forward, umbrella upraised.

"A thousand pardons Miss Roseleaf," he said, "Will you permit me to see you in to a cab?"

She permitted him. He also paid the fare, but that's a detail. She gave the name of the next street to the one she lived in and smiled sweetly as she drove off, whilst the mud splashed his socks.

"By George," cried a voice just behind him, "if that isn't Rosie Roseleaf; and, by George, if this isn't Plantagenet!" Sure enough Plantagenet was one of his names, but his parents had done some crue thing to him, for in front of Plantagenet they had stuck Peter, and after it came Potts. He was "a something in the city," shortish, stoutish, and decidedly plain. He was not as a rule, flush enough to pay many ladies cab fare, but he had paid Rosie's right away all in a rush. To be a hero for five minutes is not an uncommon desire, and in many pleasnt day dreams, otherwise timid, insignificant male bipeds have slain giants and borne off maidens of surprisng loveliness.

"I will sign, but I would rather not sit down."

Potts was a member of a twopenny-halfpenny proprietary club, Oxford Street way, where he often dined or supped and smoked and drank and bragged of his love successes. This bragging, it would appear, had not hitherto powerfully impressed the other members of the club, and more than once irreverent scoffers had hailed his arrival with jibing cries of "What cheer, Plantagenet, another Duchess?"

But there was no getting over that Roseleaf cab incident. The paying of the cabman was taken as proof that he and Rosie were on intimate terms. It was clear as day that Potts was coaxed and cajoled into various injudicious and awfully untruthful admissions relative to Rosie, and by certain winks and nods he even went much further.

It was a mean and despicable, but not at all uncommon, thing this drunken idiot did, but he little thought what was to follow. It was a small outside club, as I have intimated, whereat these lies were told, and the members were all respectable nobodies, but these sort of persons dearly love prattling on such a subject. Nowadays almost everybody knows an actor, and even one of the members of the Mumblechump knew one who knew Harold Howard, and 'twas thus that high-toned histrion came to hear of Rosie's favoured lover.

You should have been there that night at the bar when "Charles, his friend," brought the news. He fared scarcely better than that "cream-faced loon" who brought the unwelcome message to Macbeth. He was terrible in his wrath, was the virtuous husband. Vainly Charles sought to soothe him with conciliatory two. He knitted his brows and hoarsely murmured, "I'll have his blood!" Like unto a raging lion he paced the flagstones outside the stage door, and when Rosie, clad in smiling innocence and a fair garment, came forth, there was such loud talk, that passers-by turned round to listen.

"Potts!" cried Harold, with unutterable loathing, and forgetful of the fact that there had ever been any Sprigginses about, "Potts! The degradation of the very name!" But explanations followed, Rosie's innocence was triumphantly established, and Harold and his little missus supped at the latter's expense hard by, and cabbed it home.

Now comes the hour of vengeance, with horrors to follow. Mr Potts one evening had returned to his chambers in Gray's Inn about a quarter to twelve, and had taken off his coat preparatory to popping into his lounge jacket, when there came a sharp rat-tat on the "sported oak." He went to open it. "My name's Howard. I'm the husband of the lady whose professional name is Rosie Roseleaf." "I'm delighted to make your acquaintance,' said Potts, feeling very sick.

Howard Spriggins, who was accompanied by Charles, his friend, locked the doors, and put the key of the inner one into his pocket. Then he laid aside his hat and overcoat and placed a sheet of foolscap on the table "Read that," he said. "What's this? Scotch? I'll help myself!" He was a man of his word He took about sixpennyworth.

I will not bring a blush to the master printer's face by giving here a verbatim copy of that damning document, but content myself by saying it began thus: "I, Peter Plantagenet Potts, calling myself a gentleman," and ended with, "and I hereby own that I am a liar, a sneak, and coward, and that the aforesaid Harold Howard, Esquire, comedian, has well and exhaustively kicked me till he was tired, and I am only too thankful to get off so cheaply, though I feilvery sore.

"I can't sign that!" screamed Potts, flinging down the paper. "You shall sign it," said the actor, "now or afterwards."

"After?" gasped Potts. Howard Spruggins at this moment towered majestic.

"Place him in position," he said to Charles, his friend, who seizing Potts in a grp of iron twisted him around with his back towards the avenging angel, and forcibly "tucked his twopenny" as though for leap-frog.

* * *

"Do you want any more?" "No." Sit down and sign." "I will sign, but I would rather not sit down."

* * *

It was agreed that the contents of that dreadful paper should never, after what had passed, be made public. But what a future was in store for the wretched Peter Plantagenet! In the face of every man he knew he fancied he could see a half-disguised wink or smothered smile. He could not, do what he would, believe in that heavy-footed gentleman's word. Already, how many knew it? No one but Charles, his friend, and Rosie Roseleaf You see, Harold, and Charles, his friend, had talked this little business over in business-like fashion, like men of the world, and after inquiry, had concluded that Potts wasn't worth tackling legally, and that it would not be much of an advertisement. Therefore a good kicking and a little judicious half-crown or so black-mailing would "meet cires."

About a week after that terrible night, drinking with a friend at the Marble Halls, the victim, feeling a sharpish nudge, as though from a knee, at the back of him, turned to meet Harold's eyes fixed steadfastly on his own. "Potts, old boy, I've left my purse at home," he said, "lend me ten bob."

BOBBY'S CHANCE GONE.

"If yer love me, Bobby, buy me a diaming bracetelet." "Is it more nor tuppence?"

PLEASANT FOR THE PATIENT.

Lunatic Barber. Whatsay, sonny? Don't want to be shaved with that gappy instrument? Why, it 'ud take a hair off tha top of your eyeball!

"COOKERY TIPS" (By Our Chef)

A CLERICAL DINNER

The enjoyment of a good dinner being one of the few sins that clergymen in the present day are allowed to indulge in with impunity, most reverend gentlemen are very good judges of how the thing should be done, and if you wish to stand well with your Church, the best thing you can do, next to subscribing to everything, is to feed the parson.

MENU.

Soups a

Salary Soup Lent-il Soup

Fish b

Whale a la Jonah. Soles and Plaice. c

Entree

A Fatted Calf in Cutlets Gnats Minced. s

Roast

Camels, Whole. d

Sweets e

Tipsy Cake. Omelette au Rhum.

Brandied Cherries.

a As far as practicable the menu should be written in English, as many Clergymen have an idea that everything French is frivolous.

b Small loaves should be served with this course, as the cloth is noted for its partiality for the loaves and fishes.

c Give your guests their choice, for it has been said that there are parsons who prefer their place to any number of souls.

s When carefully minced they may be taken without straining

d After swallowing one of these they won't require any other joint

e Do not omit these on any account, for there are many reverend gentlemen who are prevented by circumstances, or their wives, or bishops, or something, from drinking wine, and this is the only form in which they are allowed to take a little stimulant.

You must be guided in the selection of any further items, by the opinions of those you have invited; thus, Broad beans are generally suitable, and there are some padres who would not object to joining you in a little game, if not too high.

THE MAJOR'S PARROT

"I once possessed a valuable parrot," said the Major, who, having commandered a very economical thirst-quencher, was diligently but vainly exploring the geography of his person to discover the wherewithal to satisfy the inexorable demands of the landlord, "only I killed it."

"Killed it!" exclaimed Mr Smith and the landlord together, in astonishment. "I have heard of a good many foolish actions," added Mr Smith, "but I really think that wasting a valuable parrot by killing it must take top place." "I suppose," the landlord observed, with just the slightest suspicion of a sneer, as he knocked the ash from his pipe, "it never occured to you to sell the parrot?" To neither of these remarks did the Major vouchsafe a reply. "And now," the landlord continued, laughing, "you find yourself hard up for the price of a drink. What was the bird worth?" "About twenty pounds," replied the Major. "Could he talk?" inquired Mr Smith. "Yes." "Then why on earth didn't you sell him?" The Major remained silent for a few moments, absorbed in his own reflections. He then began.

"At that time I was in easy, even affluent circumstances. A dollar or two more or less scarcely made any difference to me then. My tradesman's accounts were always in a fair state of equalisation. My credit remained steadily at par, sometimes even a trifle above, and I very rarely owed more than three weeks rent. My hospitality was counted by the very best in the neighbourhood. The local bank manager was not ashamed to take tea with the Major, nor to be seen in his company. In short, I considered myself a rising man." "What has all that to do with the parrot?" Mr Smith inquired. "I am telling you," the Major answered, and then went on: "I had an idea of permanently settling down in the district where I was living, and I determined to try for the post of rate-collector. I managed to get friendly with people in the right quarter, and things were going on swimmingly. One day a lady and a gentleman called to see me—the gentleman I had been making up to—who could influence my appointment—and his wife. I entertained them to tea to the best of my ability; they seemed perfectly pleased, and I began to think my appointment quite secure. The lady was very much taken up with my parrot, and by calling him 'Sweet, sweet, pretty polly,' and so forth, tried to get him to talk. He was not in a talking mood, however, and would not open his mouth. I said to the lady, 'Sometimes he wont talk unless you give him a piece of water-
ss, though sometimes he will. With your
nission I will just go up the road and fetch
some.' I did so. When I returned, however, I noticed a distinct change of manner on the part of both the lady and the gentleman. A peculiar reserve had taken the place of the open good-humour they had previously shown. Anxious to prevent the fun from flagging, I produced the water cress, went up to the parrot's cage, and said: 'Now I'll soon make him talk.'"

"To my surprise, the lady replied quite coldly, 'Don't trouble, Major, thank you. He has been talking very nicely while you were out.' Then turning to her husband she added, 'I think we must be going now, John.' I was perfectly dumbfounded; but worse followed when, just as he was leaving, the gentleman called me aside and said, 'By the bye, Major, I forgot to tell you, we have practically decided upon our man for rate-collector. I am sorry, for your sake, it cannot be helped.' After they left that parrot kept as silent as the grave. I tried him with watercress—no good. I tried him without watercress—no better. But a thought had come into my head that I could not get rid of. I felt there was something behind all this, and I could not rest until I had found out what it was. At last I went round to Billy Ogdon's, and asked him to come over to my place. I put him up to my plan, and we both went together into the room where the parrot was. I then said aloud, 'Mr Ogdon, I am going up the road to get some watercress for the bird. He does not seem very well today.' With that I went to the front door, opened it, and shut it again with a bang, to make believe I had gone out. Then carefully removing my boots, I crept noiselessly back into the room, hid behind the screen and listened. The parrot did not keep me waiting long. 'What,' says he, thinking of course that Billy Ogden was alone in the room, 'what do you think of the old Major now? He takes three unfurnished rooms at five and six a week the lot, and calls it a flat. Goes round to the Hackney Furnishing Company and gets ten pounds worth of furniture on the Model Instalment System (which he'll never pay off as long as he lives), borrows a few books with showy covers from friends who are fools enough to lend them to him, puts a couple of old photograph frames and a one and fourpenny clock that doesn't belong to him on the mantelpiece, and then styles himself a local resident, and talks about his banking account. Why, he never had more than two shillings in the Post Office, and he took that out, 'with interest to close,' long ago. Boasts he has never been bankrupt, when he never even had enough to go bankrupt with. He simply cadges about all day amongst his pals for half-dollars and drinks, gets three-parts 'sprung,' and then comes home, sits down to read the newspaper wrong side up, and fancies himself a toff. And that's the man who wants to be put up for rate-collector. I'd rate collect him if I had my way. I know him.'"

"Do you imagine for one moment," the Major concluded, "that I would sell a parrot and have him floating about the world talking like that! No, not I!" and, with that, the Major walked out without finding the wherewithal to pay for his drink, and the landlord a sympathetic and kindly soul did not call him back.

—:o:—

SETTLED HIS HASH.

Chorus Gent. How is it I saw you flirting with that young idiot, Lord Schlosh?
His Good Lady. How? Why, because you must have been looking—idiot.

"PREPARING FOR THE WORST"

"Good evening, Mrs Smithers," said the vicar, "what can I do for you?" "Please, sir, I've come about John." "Your husband? Oh, yes—is he any worse?" "No, sir, he aint no wuss so to speak, but he aint no better," replied the red-eyed woman," and the doctor said as how if he didn't get no better, he couldn't save 'un—so I've been preparin' for the wust." "Ah! that's very wise," observed the clergyman, thinking of the burial fees, "very commendable on your part." "I knew as you'd say so, sir," answered Mrs Smithers, with evident gratification, "and I feels sure as how you'll help me." "Tell me all about it, and we'll see what we can do." "Well, sir—it's like this. As soon as I heard that John was a-goin', and that there weren't no savin' of him, I began to look roun' and see what I could do for the best." "Very wise! very wise!" "And so I ain't so young as I wes—though I'm not a-sayin' that I'm old, mind you, not a bit of it—but, still, the best as I could wes old Giles—the cow-man. So I gets him to come roun' one ev'nin' to see if my John's clothes would fit 'un, and to make all the other 'rangements, and then if you'd a-heard John a-carryin' on you'd a-thought he'd gone off his head. But 'twas on'y his nasty temper, sir. He allers was a dog-in-the-manger man—that he was. As I said to him, you can't take 'em with you, and you wont want no watch where you're goin'—even if the metal would stand the heat, which I don't reckon it would, and then he ups and says as how he'll haunt me as long as he lives if I marry Giles, or let 'un wear his things. And as your a justice, sir, I want to know if you won't bind 'un over to keep the peace at the same time as you buries him—and if it will cost much more?"

KISSING CONOEMNERS.

An Anti-Kissing Crusade recently started in America has grown to such an extent, that many mothers even abstain from kissing their babies, while sweethearts—well, there——!

I.

Kiss not! Kiss not! Ah, listen why
You never more should slobber,
If from Bacteria you would fly,
And shun Disease (Life's robber).
No more e'en lovers' lips should meet
In fervent osculation;
The kiss is but a fell deceit,
That means annihilation.
Man, Wife and Miss,
Be warned by this,
And never, never seek to kiss!

II.

Great Scotauss! What is this we find?
In vain seems all our warning,
Some still to kiss appear inclined—
Yes, Death and Danger scorning.
Lo! sweethearts here and mothers there
Try osculation gaily:
E'en husbands and their wives still dare
To kiss each other daily.
And what is this?
Ah! what's amiss?
They die not with each daring kiss!

SO SYMPATHETIC.

Carry Cavendish. My grandfather was killed in the Crimea.
Mabel Montrose. How sad! Was he a married man?

HELLO! HELLO!! – HELLO!!!

Who's that? . . . Is that you, Lardi? . . . Oh! how funny! I was just taking off the receiver to ring you up and tell you all my troubles . . . Troubles? My stars, yes; I should think I have! Well, I'll tell you what happened to me yesterday—but to do that, I must go back still further, to the day when Bob first told me that I was getting "snappy and nervey"

* * *

I was sitting on his knee talking about our future life of joy and bliss—(shut up! I hate telephone gurgles!)—with one arm round his neck and my chin resting on the top of his nice sleek honey-of-flowered head, when a pin ran into me somewhere.

* * *

"Oh! d—n!" I shouted, leaping to the ground, after uttering an ear-splitting yell.

"My dear old thing, you really must do something for your nerves!" said Bob with a bit of a sneer. "You've been doing nothing lately but squeal and snap and jump and twitch and jerk and everything else, which shows you are in a bally bad state of nervous exhaustion. You must take something or try something for it!"

* * *

Well, that set me thinking (no, no; th-inking—not drinking), and I realised that what he said was true.

* * *

And "nerves" are awful—absolutely crumple you up after a bit, don't they?—so I got scared and tried bromade and phosphorine and aspirin and all the patent medicines ever made, but all to no good.

* * *

I still cussed and jumped when pins ran into me, and glared when people trod on my toe, and shivered when a bus nearly smashed up me and my taxi—in fact, showed emotion where a girl of my noble birth and breeding ought to remain calm, and made a general nuisance of myself.

* * *

"Tootsie, you're nervey!" said the Dook, when I shuddered because Pa sneezed ten times, while three doors banged, and Alexandry practised the concertina and seven tyres burst (out in the street) simultaneously.

"Yes, I believe I am! I wish I knew how to cure it!" I replied dolefully.

"I'll tell you. Quite easy—FISH!" "Fish? D'you mean eat plaice and co—" "No, no cach fish—or try to catch fish. Nothing like fishing for the nerves. An uncle of mine had got neuritis and neuralgia and St. Vitus's dance and locomotor ataxy and all the other nerve complains, and nothing did him a scrap of good until he started off by himself with a rod and line and worms—and fished. The first day he was better, the second day better still, the third day well Absolute cure for nerves—fiishing!"

* * *

And that settled it. Right away I made up my nice pure and innocent mind—I would go and fish.

* * *

Of course if I caught any poor wriggling pet I would put him back again—but, from all I had heard, it didn't seem likely that I should do anything so cruel.

* * *

But the calm serenity of sitting out in the damp with a bit of string fastened to a stick, and without speaking to anyone, should be tried.

Therefore I made enquiries, and found out that a good spot for trying out my new treat- a little backwater between Moonbury and ment would be a place called Grotty Creek—Hatchet—and I borrowed Milly de Popp's car and chaffeur to take me there.

It was a fine morning when I arrived about eleven o'clock, so, after telling the car to come back for me at six, I opened my little camp stool, sat down and began to see about baiting my hook.

I got flies and worms, but when I saw the dear things wriggle (you know how I love all dumb brothers, don't you?) I decided to try chocolate cake instead. So, taking a bit out of the parcel I had brought for my lunch, I stuck it on the hook and threw it into the water.

* * *

". . . It! What the . . are you doing? Go away!"

Those were the words I heard, Lardi—heard 'em shouted from the other side of a bush on my right. "Who are you?" I yelled. "I am fishing, and I don't want you and your chocolate cake spoiling my sport." "I've as much right to fish as you have!" "Have you? I'll see about that! Now here's your bally line—I'll break that for you!" "Will you? Then I'll ———"

* * *

But I didn't finish the sentence, because, so infuriated was I that I began to creep round the bush to try and see—yes, my dear, that was it. You've guessed right. Yes, I fell in with a splash, into the ice-cold water. "Oh! help! Save me" I squealed. "All right! You don't deserve it, but I suppose I must!" came the reply. And a moment later I found that two strong arms had picked me out and carried me back to the bank Then Lardi, I looked up and saw a pair of the bluest eyes (you know how blue eyes always 'get me,' don you?) and the most attractive mouth I've seen for a long time. "Who are you," I murmured "I amer-well 'Donald' is enough for you!" "How kind of you to save me" "Yes, it is! but I'm going to have my reward now that I see what a very peach-like young person you are. I'm going to kiss you now—right away—then I'm going to carry you to the little pub just at the back here, where they'll dry your things—then we'll sit in the parlour by the fire and go on kissing for the rest of the day! That's the programme, my chocolate-cake fisher-girl. Here's the start!"

* * *

So that was a nice way of calming down my nerves, wasn't it? I set out for a placid uneventful dullness, me at one end of a line and a bit of bait at the other,and instead, I get-er-well, my dear, if I tell you the rest, you must promise not to say a word to Bob, because—are you there?—Lardi?—oh! cash! the phone's 'gone dead'—not a sound!—can't even call the Exchange! cuss it! I must fly out to a call office and report to the supervisor!

* * *

Perhaps it's a good thing though—that cat Lardi never can be trusted!

SEMI-TEETOTALISM.

THE NEW MOVEMENT—HOW IT WORKS

Caller. Half soda and half whisky, please—I'm a semi-teetotaller Do please conform to the by-laws and regulations, old man

HENCE THE HENCENESS.

Tittie. Bébé is going about saying you are a spiteful puss. What's up?
Trillie. Oh, she asked me my candid opinion as to whether she looked her age.
Tittie. Well?
Trillie Oh, I told her

ACCOUNTED FOR IT.

"Well, *you* look happy! What's the game?"
"Shiftee has just asked me to lend him fifty poundy"
"But I thought you hated him?"
"Just so—I refused him."

ALLY'S PALS

STAN. MATTHEWS
BLACKPOOL

THE OLD LOVE AND THE NEW.

Tubby. Scotch or Irish—you must get rid of that dog: *Wife.* I thought you were so fond of both, dearie?

THE BIRTH OF THE SLOPER TWINS

It was on April 1st, the year doesn't really matter, that the twins were born. About one o'clock in the afternoon I left Sloper Alley to go to the House of Commons where it was my intention to do my article on my impressions of Parliament for Ally Sloper's Half Holiday. Just when the leader of the opposition was making his speech in defence of a bill restricting the earnings of every person to a maximum income of £400 per annum. He had just said no man should have more than £400 a year. Take the cost of living as it is today, fish-suppers at 2d and as much salt and vinegar as you wish, sometimes more than you wish when the lid comes off the salt-cellar, and all the news free gratis, cigarettes 1d for five, beer 1½d a pint, whisky 6d a glass, so gentlemen, what more do you want? A voice from the opposite side said: "What about clothes? We are not nudists and we cannot lower the tone of this house by asking for fish-suppers, we must needs ask for a fish-tea which costs us 1/6d." Just at that moment a message was handed to me which said "Come home. Urgent." I had been expecting this message and with much haste and noise made to leave the press gallery, the noise I made was so great that the speaker was about to call me to a point of order, so I thought. As I was making for the outer door of the house my colleague of "The Times" who was passing, put out his hand and said "Just a minute, Ally, I want to speak to you." So great was my excitement that I exclaimed "Get me a cab, Archie, I'm going to have a baby." "Good heavens!" exclaimed Archie. "steady yourself old man, I'll be your manager, never knew you were such a freak you should put more water in it, Ally." "Fathead," said I "the wife is going to have a baby." "Oh, that is different, and quite natural." Just at that minute a cab drew up and Winston Churchill came out. I asked the cabby if he was free he said yes, so I got into the cab saying "Sloper Alley, in a hurry." When I arrived home Tootsie opened the door for me and informed me that Mrs Sloper was in hospital. Seeing that there was no cab in sight and that the hospital was only about ten minutes walk from the house, I took Shank's pony and was at the enquiry desk of the hospital in five minutes. The young lady at the desk with unaffected air, said, "Yes sir, anything I can do for you?" I then explained my business and she directed me to the third floor. On arriving there I was almost knocked down by a man who seemed to be dazed or wandered and strange to say he seemed to think that I was wandered for he said "Are you wanting the waiting-room?" My reply was "No, I want to see the nurse, for my wife is having a baby." "Oh," said he, "my wife has just had three, you go into that room over there and you will see a nurse who will give you any information you want." On entering the room, which was the waiting room, I saw other four men, one of them was walking up and down the room and another was trying to give the impression that he was interested in something going on outside, as for the other two—they seemed to be in a semi-dazed condition. Before I could make any inquiry from one of those individuals, a nurse walked in and called out "Mr Thom." Now Mr Thom seemed to be one of the two gentlemen who were sitting in a semi-dazed condition and he got such a start when he heard his name called out that he slid to the floor off the chair. Ultimately he got to his feet and he and the nurse left the room, a minute or two later the nurse returned and came forward to me and said "Is there anything I can do for you sir?" On my informing her of my business and telling her that I was Mr Ally Sloper, she then informed me that I was just to wait. How long I waited I don't know, but, be that as it may, the nurse ultimately did return and called out "Mr Sloper." We both went outside and she then informed me that I was the father of a boy, but I'd better go home and probably they would be sending me a message as there was every likelihood that there would be a duplicate or triplicate. When I came too, after this shock, I began to wonder as to whether I had dropped into a Government Department, knowing that almost everything is there done in triplicate, and my prayer was that they would not be doing somethings in quadruplicate. In the light of my condition I felt I could do with a stimulant, so went into the "Hole and Corner" and had a glass and a pint after which I returned home. It is sometimes difficult to realise that time, so far as its duration is concerned, is always the same in its fixity of duration and that it appear to be longer or shorter according to our circumstances and our mental outlook in relation to those circumstances, but as I waited on further word from the hospital I felt that days not hours were passing; as all things ultimately come to an end, so did my tedious wait. As a message came to me that Mrs Sloper had given birth to another boy I then with fear and trembling asked if I might expect any more such messages, and the reply was I could come and see the babies any time I cared to call and that they were all doing well and no more messages of such a nature would be coming to me.

Now I felt I could relax a little and surely this was the time to have two glasses and two pints, so again I adjourned to the "Hole and Corner." When I got there I felt it was a stupid game keeping count of what I was drinking for I felt the strain was becoming too much for my arithmetical capabilities and under the circumstances it would be unfair if I did not drink a toast to the wife and one for baby No. 1 and one for baby No. 2, and of course one or two for myself.

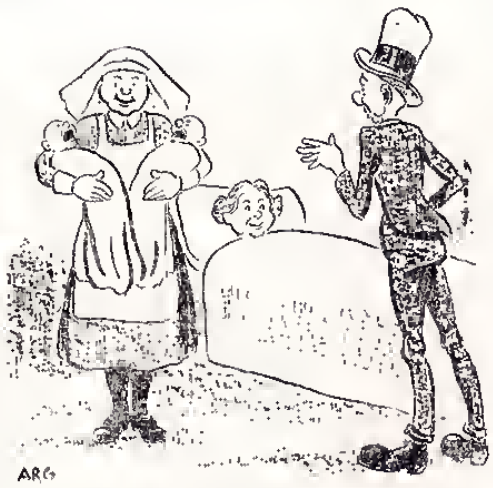
After awakening from that very necessary part that father has to perform on an occasion such as this, namely, the toasting and celebrating as mentioned in the foregoing passage, I found I was into another day and therefore called at the hospital to see Mrs Sloper and the twins who were all progressing favourably. And, Mrs Sloper with characteristic business acue which in a woman, no matter the circumstances, always comes to the front, smilingly said to me "Well, Ally, you will now need to see about increasing your earnings." and I in my usual way did not discourage her, but told her that I had anumber of things coming forward that were all money spinners, though in my own mind I realised there probably would be some difficulties to overcome before I got them spinning and that I would myself on many occasions be the one that was spinning.

Now dear readers, as you have been most patient and I hope not altogether bored, and between us we have managed to see that the twins have arrived into this world, I intend giving you a rest so far as the twins are concerned and hope in future editions of Ally Sloper's Half Holiday to tell you some of the adventures and incidents in the lives of those twins. If it so happens that I am out of town and unable to tell about the twins I have good deputies in the person of Mrs Sloper and Tootsie, for as you will appreciate I am a very busy man having received invitations from many old friends who would like to meet me and old foes who state that they are definitely going to see that they will meet me, the latter is the reason why I may have to goout of town, as you will understand I have lost much of my capabilities as a swordsman and feel that I don't want my return to earth to be of so short a time as all that. You will be hearing from me again.

Yours always,

"ALLY SLOPER."

He got such a start when he heard his name called out that he slid to the floor off the chair.



I called at the hospital to see Mrs Sloper and the twins.

SKETCHES FROM A SPICY DIVORCE CASE.

By Our Own Special Co-Respondent.

DISGUSTIN' OOTRAGES ON THE BROWSIDE.

(1) Stravaguin' doon the toon for his mornin' dram, the Laird encountert wee Jeems McWhang. "Whaur are ye gaun in yer faither's buits?" roared the Laird. "They're no' ma faither's buits—they're Snuffy Mungo's; an' Aw'm gaun tae see McNab gettin' his photty ta'en, tae be printit in 'Scotch Sanets an' their Sanctuaries.'" "The brazen-faced, bauld-headit Bacchanaal—in braid daylicht tae! Aw'll stop his impulins wi' a strang haund. It's me the man wants—an' no' that wratched roarin' ramstuzzler."

(2) The Elder was vera laith tae bu't thare. "Onor muckle publeecity," said he. An' he only consentit at last whan the man telt him that deevil incarnate pourit on his sacred heed about forty-fower an' Scothin' fair yearnsel for't, an' that he was engagit three-quarter gallon o' ley-reakit water. An' at that juncture, the pottygrafter tae plottly the Laird for "Wild Beasts in Their Grottes and Lairs," a new publication o' appallin' blude-curdlin' hue comic paper, an' the Elder was held up tae scorn an' reedeecule atrocity.

(3) The pottygrafter had jist said, "Elder, will ye be graciously pleased tae look pleesant," which the Elder did, whan some MeNab is goin' tae smush the Laird tin cheenee, the next time he meets him.

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